

Introduction

In the recommendations of the European Commission on the preparation of CAP strategic plans, both Lithuania and other EU countries are advised to strengthen the efficiency of the agricultural knowledge and innovation system by integrating different intervention measures and involving as many active participants in the agriculture and forestry sector as possible.

Special attention is paid here to agricultural consultants, the variety of consulting services and the high quality of consulting services, which can ensure the smooth transfer of agricultural knowledge and innovations. In this way, contributing to the implementation of the CAP goals, EU biodiversity, the strategy "From field to table" and other goals and measures provided for in the Green Deal strategies.

In practice, standards for counselling offered by various agencies are often applied, but they are not related to the implementation of the CAP and other strategic aspirations. Therefore, to avoid subjectivity in assessing the quality of agricultural consulting services and considering the context of the country's CAP and strategic aspirations, it is appropriate to prepare a standard for the quality of agricultural consulting services.

Using this standard, it would be possible to assess the quality of services provided by consultants, which would promote competition and progress in the sector. The standard should be updated after a certain period and help to maintain a high level of quality of consulting services and significantly contribute to the effectiveness of CAP implementation.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE – to identify the essential components of agricultural advisory service quality standard.

- After conducting a deep analysis of scientific literature and practical sources, it was found that the quality assessment of Agricultural consulting services is a complex and multifaceted process that includes the consultant's competence, customer service, service delivery process and achieved results.
- The assessment of the characteristics characterizing the quality of agricultural consulting services includes different components defining the quality of consulting services defined in the literature and practices, and also integrates the main principles of quality management, as well as the attitudes, competencies of the participants in the consulting process (service providers - consultants and service recipients - clients/farmers), experience and expectations.
- The table below contains indicators describing the quality of the consulting service, which is defined by the essentials of the standard. The scheme also provides a recommended course of development of the standard.

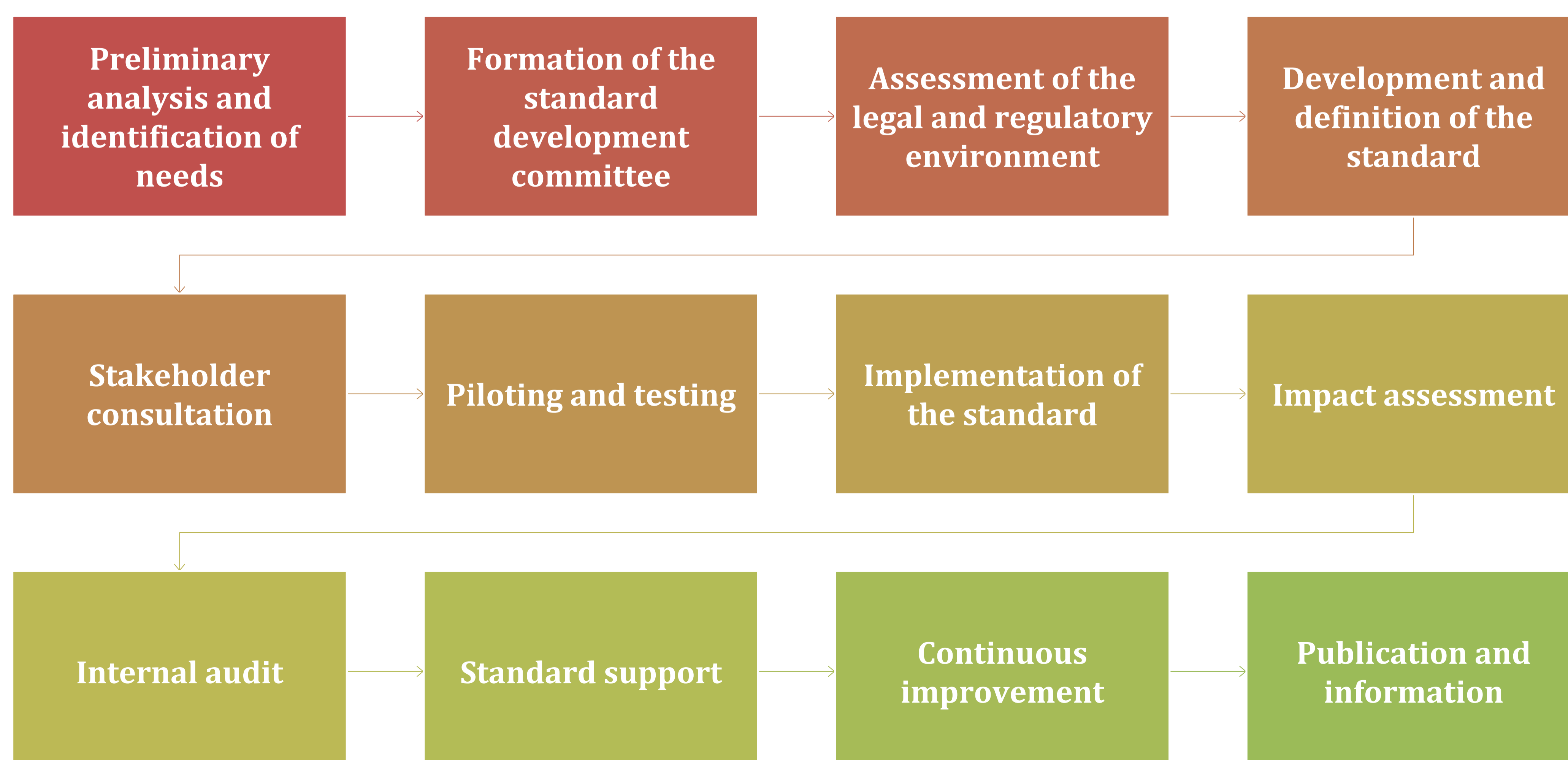


Table 1. The set of criteria describing the high quality of agricultural consulting services

Criterion describing the High quality of agricultural consulting services	The distal criterion and its dimensions describing the high quality of the agricultural consulting service
Qualification units	Education (Consultant's CV and/or certificate); Years of experience in the field being consulted (Consultant CV and/or certificate)
Professional competences in the consulted field	Validity and efficiency of the proposed solutions; solution alternatives; Data security and confidentiality; Compliance with agreements, deadlines; Consistent creation and adherence to the counseling plan, agreements on the counseling process, qualitative and quantitative achievement indicators; Consultant innovativeness; Knowledge of methodologies, techniques and digital consulting tools; Consultant's relations and communication skills with external entities; Professional ethics and emotional intelligence; Feedback and discussion of the consulting process and result with the client/farmer.
Well understanding of CAP and AKIS	Knowledge of relevant legal acts, knowledge of innovations, modern agricultural knowledge and innovation tools and interventions (Scores)
Knowledge of the agricultural innovation ecosystem	Ability to recognize innovation process models, knowing how to act in any situation, having and using tools related to innovation processes, problem solving skills
Social communicative competences	Clear, pleasant and reasoned language; Respect is advised for the subject, his environment, experience and problem; Communication, openness and commitment; Individual customer attention.
Continuous qualification improvement	Number of hours of professional development in the consulted area; The number of hours of professional training during practical training in the country's companies, farms, factories, etc.; Participation in partnership projects; Participation in thematic consultant exchange programs, thematic networks.
Materiality	Modern equipment and facilities; Convenient place of service provision (virtual, easily accessible, convenient office for consultation); Quality information, data, other equipment; Trusted consultant (his rating, profile, image).

Fig. 1. Recommendations for the practical preparation and monitoring of the quality standard of agricultural consultancy services